



News Release

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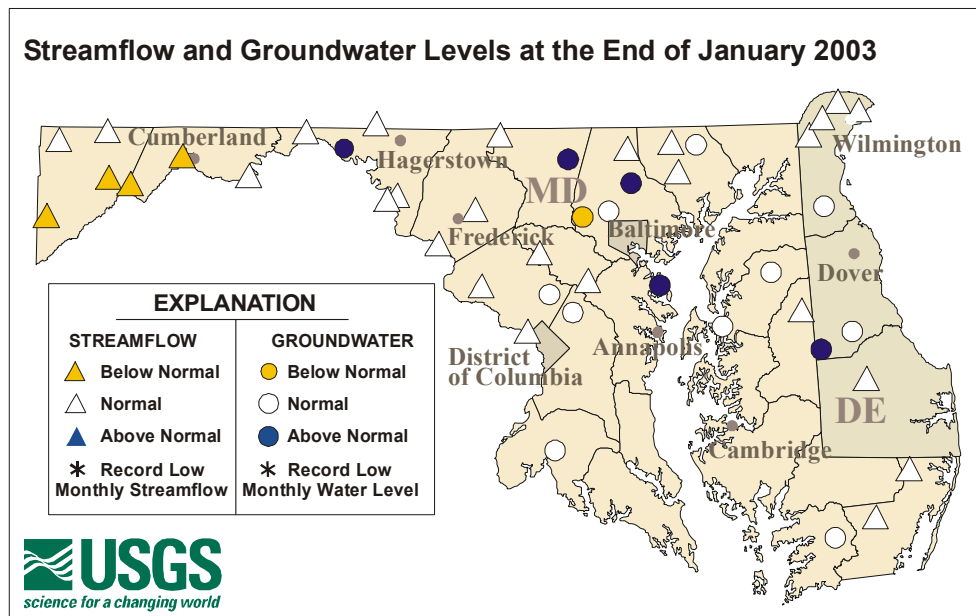
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Maryland and Delaware Streamflow and Groundwater Levels Remain Normal in January 2003

Although January rainfall was below normal, water levels in streams and wells continue to be near normal across Maryland and Delaware, according to hydrologists at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Baltimore. To keep groundwater and streamflow at normal levels, several more months of normal to above normal precipitation are needed to get us through next summer and avoid below normal or drought conditions. A water-supply drought still exists in parts of Maryland and water restrictions are still in place because reservoir levels in the Baltimore area remain below the normal levels needed to meet the water-use demands for next summer.



For news release and images, go to http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/press_release/current/

Streamflow during the last 7 days of January and monthly streamflow ranged from below normal in western Maryland to normal at streamflow gaging stations across Maryland and Delaware. All of the 30 stations used to monitor average monthly streamflow conditions by the USGS were normal in January. Five-year monthly streamflow hydrographs can be viewed on the USGS website at:

<http://md.water.usgs.gov/surfacewater/streamflow/>.

Normal to above normal streamflow has helped to refill reservoirs, but not enough to lift the water restrictions in the area served by the reservoirs. Storage in the Baltimore Reservoir System increased 8 percent to 67 percent of capacity at the end of January, and the contents of the Triadelphia and Duckett Reservoirs on the Patuxent River increased 12 percent to 92 percent of capacity. Reservoirs in the region are typically about 80 percent of capacity at this time of year. Reservoir data can be viewed at: http://md.water.usgs.gov/drought/water_watch.html.

Average monthly streamflow at the Potomac River near Washington, D.C. was at 50 percent above normal (see graphs at <http://md.water.usgs.gov/monthly/poto.html>.) Total flow into the Chesapeake Bay during December averaged 64.3 bgd (billion gallons per day), which is 9 percent above average. More information about water and the Chesapeake Bay can be found at <http://chesapeake.usgs.gov/>.

Groundwater levels were in the normal to above normal range at the end of January except for a deep, bedrock well in Baltimore County, Maryland. The water level in this well was slightly below normal at the end of January, but the water level is expected to climb into the normal range when the ground thaws, allowing for recharge. (see graphs at <http://md.water.usgs.gov/groundwater/>.)

Streamflow and groundwater levels are used to gauge water conditions and may be used to predict the potential for flooding and drought conditions. These USGS data have been provided to State and local water resource managers and are critical for making appropriate decisions on water restrictions. For more information on streamflow and groundwater levels in Maryland and Delaware, see [Water Watch](http://md.water.usgs.gov/drought/water_watch.html) at: http://md.water.usgs.gov/drought/water_watch.html.

The real-time streamflow stations used in this analysis are operated in cooperation with the Maryland and Delaware Geological Surveys, the Maryland State Highway Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Maryland Department of the Environment, and other agencies. The observation wells used in this analysis are operated in cooperation with the Maryland and Delaware Geological Surveys. The USGS publishes data for 128 streamflow stations and 379 wells across Maryland and Delaware.

The USGS, a bureau within the Department of the Interior, is the Nation's largest water, earth and biological science, and civilian mapping agency providing reliable, impartial scientific information to resource managers, planners, and other customers. This information is gathered in every state by USGS scientists to minimize the loss of life and property from natural disasters, contribute to the sound conservation and the economic and physical development of the Nation's natural resources, and enhance the quality of life by monitoring water, biological, energy, and mineral resources.

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